

Facts About Winter 2004 Scoring of Writing

- The same scoring company (Measurement Incorporated [MI]) and the same scoring procedures were used this year as last year.
- Two scorers have scored every written or constructed response on the MEAP. They do not write on the papers or see each other's scores at all. They all have college degrees and must go through extensive training and qualify on sets of papers before being hired.
- Responses are grouped in packets of 20 and are randomly distributed among a large room of scorers. One packet might have 20 papers from a school, but many packets are split between classrooms and schools and districts (e.g., the first packet a scorer gets might have 12 responses from a school in Detroit and eight from Big Rapids, the second packet a scorer gets might have six responses from Lamphere and 14 from Marquette, etc.).
- Scorers are grouped at tables with a team leader. When packets are assigned to a second scorer, they are never assigned to a reader on the same scoring team as the first reader. Packets for second scoring are also distributed so that the same two teams are not always scoring the same sets of packets.
- Each scorer may assign only a whole number score (e.g., a 2 or a 3, etc.) to a response. However, many responses have the characteristics of more than one holistic scorepoint. Scorers are trained to give students the benefit of the doubt. Each year since 1998, MEAP staff and MI staff have reviewed a number of responses after scoring to check for accuracy and consistency. Michigan teachers and ISD educators have also been involved in this effort. What we have found when scorers give adjacent scores to a response (e.g., one scorer assigns a 2 and one assigns a 3), is that is often the best set of scores for that response. In a very few cases, we have agreed that a response deserved a higher response. We have also agreed that it is more often the case that responses were scored generously the first time.
- Scorers are trained to score the writing response in front of them. They do not have any idea of the quality of a student's work on a daily basis. Sometimes, students who produce good writing on a regular basis do not do their best work on the MEAP test. Sometimes, students who are thought to be poor writers respond well to a MEAP prompt and produce a piece that is their best work.
- The MEAP writing tests at grades 4 and 7 are one-item tests. The more items on a test, the less likely the scores will fluctuate from year to year. That is why we hope to bolster the writing tests with additional items and points in the future. If a school group is small, the chance for fluctuation is even greater from year to year, because each individual student is responsible for a higher proportion of the total score.
- The mechanics of writing (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, etc.) are considered in the scores to the extent that they enhance or detract from a piece of writing. Some students use excellent mechanics, but do not write coherent responses. Other students may have terrible mechanics, but have developed, clear, focused, and connected responses.
- Responses are judged not only by the rubric, but are compared to the Scoring Guide that comes from rangefinding with a group of Michigan teachers. The 2003 Scoring Guides for grades 4, 7, and 11 are currently on our website. Each year, the previous year's Scoring Guide is used to anchor the current year's rangefinding process. This helps to ensure consistency across years.
- The Response to the Reading Selections was scored only for reading and not as part of the writing score.

2003-4 MEAP Scoring Levels

Writing

Grades 4 and 7

All MEAP writing responses are scored by two independent scorers on a 6-point rubric. The two scorers' scores are added together for a possible score of 12 total points.

The cut scores for the four levels were set in 2003 by committees of Michigan educators in a process called standard setting.

Grade 4 Range of Scores Within Levels

09-12 points = Level 1 (Exceeded Michigan Standards)
06-08 points = Level 2 (Met Michigan Standards)
04-05 points = Level 3 (Basic)
0 to 03 points = Level 4 (Apprentice)

Grade 7 Range of Scores Within Levels

10-12 points = Level 1 (Exceeded Michigan Standards)
07-09 points = Level 2 (Met Michigan Standards)
04-06 points = Level 3 (Basic)
0 to 03 points = Level 4 (Apprentice)